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AN
E S S A Y
ON
REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES.



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ON
REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES,
AND ON THE
INCONVENIENCIES
OF A
COMMONWEALTH
IN A
LARGE COUNTRY AND NATION;
ILLUSTRATED BY
EXAMPLES FROM ANCIENT AND MODERN
HISTORY;
AND CONCLUDING WITH SOME
REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

By JOHN ANDREWS, L. L. D.

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LARGE COLLECTION

OF

EXAMPLES FROM ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY

AND

REFLECTIONS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

BY JOHN ARTHUR LEE

LONDON

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REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES, &c.

THE present century has been remarkably productive of treatises and dissertations on political subjects. Never has the world been more abundantly supplied with means of enquiry into the nature of the various governments established among mankind.

THERE is no one that has not undergone a particular investigation, from the most powerful and formidable empires, to the most inconsiderable states ; all have had their examiners, their champions and admirers, as well as their censors and disapprovers.

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IN this universal review of nations, much, doubtless, of sound judgment and instruction has been displayed. As no government is destitute of merit in some of its component parts, each has been delineated and sufficiently extolled by its partizans : as none are without some flaws, these have been as carefully exposed and reprehended by their opponents.

THE result of these examinations has been, that every system of government is found to be faulty and imperfect in divers respects, and that the very best are susceptible of many improvements.

BUT as human nature can seldom divest itself of those prejudices that are imbibed in the first stages of life, and rather confirmed than weakened by education, most of those who have assumed the task of reviewers and judges of the multifarious plans of government, have retained a partiality for that which prevailed in their own country, which has visibly influenced the descriptions they have given, and the judgments they have passed on that of others.

FROM the opposition and conflict of the several opinions maintained with so much warmth and
energy

energy on both sides, an impartial by-stander may collect an ample stock of ideas and arguments by which to direct himself in the formation of his own sentiments. No man who is truly desirous of arriving at truth can miss his way, if he will be at the pains of a candid and unbiassed disquisition of the reasonings and documents laid before him.

THE excessive heat and earnestness of the contending parties is, indeed, of peculiar service to those who are intent on the discovery of truth. From the reciprocal efforts made to assert their respective causes, a multitude of facts is produced, and a variety of discussions occasioned by them, that cannot fail to throw a strong and efficacious light on the subject in contention.

WHOEVER has perused the many performances of this kind that abound in France and England especially, will readily assent to the observation that has been made of the influence which is so powerfully retained by the first impressions that men receive,

It has been said of Plutarch, that whether he is read in his original language, or in a translation,

still we may discover him to be a Greek. What is said of this illustrious writer is strictly applicable to the French or English who have treated of politics. The genius and disposition of these two rival people are discernible in all their writings on these matters. However judicious and profound in their remarks and enquiries, yet we can easily trace the warm attachment they respectively feel for the political establishments prevailing in each country.

THERE are, it must not be denied, some exceptions to this rule ; but they are very few.

NEITHER in their writings or conversation do either the French or English refrain from venting their disapprobation and hatred of each other's government.

THE fact is, that from the general prevalence of the principles on which absolute monarchies are founded, the inhabitants of the European kingdoms are but little acquainted with that system of government which is established in this Island ; the French, tho' our nearest neighbours, as little perhaps as any.

THE only foreigners of note who speak pertinently of the constitution of England, are Montesquieu and De Lolme ; but the first evidently retains a predilection in favour of that of France. Possibly he might not judge it safe or prudent, as he resided in that kingdom, to refuse it a preference in so essential a respect ; but whatever his motives might be, he falls far short of the second, both in his knowledge and praises of the nature of our government.

BUT if we are not much beholden to the generality of strangers for their opinions on this matter, they have as little obligation to us, on the other hand. We are unlimitably free in the delivery of our sentiments on the political situation and circumstances of foreign nations ; we lay ourselves out without the least reserve, and treat them all without any ceremony, sometimes indeed without good-manners.

AMIDST the bold and unrestrained notions we so confidently utter on such occasions, it were much to be wished we did not, as we too often do, vary considerably from truth and propriety of representation. The condition of most of our neighbours is bad enough, without endeavouring, by
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our descriptions, to make it worse than it is in reality.

It were well, if the indignation we feel at the unworthy treatment of so great a portion of mankind, could stop, and be satisfied with the speculative effusions of our wrath against the authors of their calamities; but it too frequently happens, that, forgetting the immense disparity between the official powers lodged in the hands of the supreme magistrate of the British nation, and the boundless power possessed by the heads of the neighbouring nations, we conceive an antipathy against the very title that magistrate is invested with, merely because he enjoys it in common with other sovereigns.

THIS groundless antipathy has always subsisted, more or less, in this country, ever since our civil wars in the last century. The restoration of monarchy, in the person of Charles the Second, was far from suppressing the republican spirit that had so violently raged for a course of years, to the total destruction of the English constitution. It cannot be denied, that Charles did very little to reconcile his subjects to monarchical government. Nothing but the dread of seeing a renewal of those
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domestic miseries that were still fresh in the remembrance of all men, prevented his reign from being embrued in as much blood as that of his father.

THE behaviour of his brother and successor, James the Second, contributed no less to render the people of this country suspicious of their monarchs. Notwithstanding the limits that were prescribed to kingly power at the Revolution quieted the apprehensions of the nation at large, still the memory of the convulsions that had shaken and distracted the realm during so considerable a part of the foregoing reigns, dwelt ineffaceably on the minds of people. Tho' the generality were better affected to a monarchy than a commonwealth, as having experienced the inconveniences of both, yet many bore an irreconcilable aversion to the very name and office of King.

THESE ideas, instead of relaxing, have, since the accession of the present Royal Family, rather gained ground. The reverence with which our ancestors beheld the possessors of their throne, is strangely diminished. Their descendants are so deeply plunged in parties and disputes upon all subjects

subjects which will admit of any, that their principal attachment is now confined to the respective heads of the different factions which have of late been so fatal to this country.

THE success with which republican principles have been disseminated over the whole face of the British empire, need not be insisted upon : it is obvious to all men of the least observation. What renders the consequences of such a disposition more dangerous than they may appear at first sight, is, that they are principally prevalent among the subordinate and most numerous classes. Multitudes are infected with them in a degree the more alarming, as they are not sensible to what mischiefs these principles have a natural tendency to lead, when they are not adopted in that guarded manner, of which only the enlightened part of mankind is capable of forming a just idea.

LET not the rational friends to sound and true liberty imagine, that the least diminution of that noble share which we happily enjoy, is aimed at by these strictures. It is, on the contrary, from a warm affection to real freedom, they are laid before

before the Public : it is thro' a sincere desire to preserve us from those evils which flow from an intemperate use of that greatest of all blessings, this monitory sketch of the perils attending too fond an indulgence of republican principles, is here attempted.

WITH all deference to those who think they cannot be too strongly inculcated throughout the land, may it be permitted to ask them, To what intent they wish so warmly to recommend an increase and extension of them ? Are they not already sufficiently rooted in the minds of all men ? Is there a person of the smallest education among us, unacquainted with the rights and privileges of an Englishman ? This perpetual enforcing of them would seem to insinuate, that they were infringed, or that designs were harboured among the rulers of the nation to abridge them.

IN a country subject to be so powerfully influenced and divided by contending factions, every advantage will, of course, be taken by each party that circumstances will afford them. In the employment of these advantages the strictness of the laws will often be disregarded. Human nature is too liable to violence and precipitation in the

means it uses to compass its ends, to attend with due respect to every regulation made for the good order of society ; but surely it does not follow that a settled determination is formed to invert the whole order of that society, some of whose rules have been transgressed in the heat and hurry which accompany the proceedings of different parties, whose aim is to disappoint and thwart each other, but by no means to destroy the state.

THUS much it may not be improper to offer to the consideration of those who are so ready to accuse others of evil designs against the Public, on every slight infraction of the laws ; as if in their amazing multiplicity it were at all surprising, that the passions and feelings of ambitious men should frequently urge them to trespass against some, in the pursuit of their manifold schemes.

THESE everlasting jealousies and accusations, even of the best and most irreproachable characters, have, during a long series of years, strongly marked the features of the people in this country. No Minister, no public man has escaped them. They may be considered as the ostracism of the Athenians. As this was levelled at such individuals

viduals as had rendered themselves conspicuous thro' their illustrious actions or eminent qualities, so this censorious disposition of the English seldom fails to attack every person who distinguishes himself remarkably in public transactions. Nothing short of absolute perfection is secure from invectives: in other words, no failings, however venial, are forgiven; and the imperfections inseparable from the human condition are forgotten in the unlimited expectations which are formed from every man who undertakes the management of public affairs.

THAT men should be watchful over the conduct of their rulers, is highly reasonable. Without such vigilance, Ministers might either become careless and indolent, or be tempted to frame pernicious projects. It is not, therefore, the attention of the Public to the conduct of Administration that is here condemned; on the contrary, a true and zealous patriot must wish and recommend it never to cease: it is only the needless apprehension and excessive touchiness, if one may so express it, of the majority of our countrymen that deserves to be stigmatized: it perverts their ideas, and leads them into those unjustifiable misconceptions that

are so frequently the source of much disorder and confusion.

THIS propensity to find fault and blame with such unfeeling virulence all measures that do not correspond with their hopes and desires, proceeds entirely from a licentiousness of temper inspired by an improper admission and application of republican principles.

THESE naturally impel such as are guided by them to scrutinize without indulgence into all errors and faults committed by those who are entrusted with the executive power. The jealousy with which they view people in authority, and the level on which they place all individuals, induce them to exercise their judgment over them without any mixture of respect and complaisance : however exalted the station of a man may be, it is no protection from the severity of their examination.

SUCH principles, abstractedly considered, are undoubtedly just, and founded on the strictest propriety. While restrained within the bounds of moderation, they cannot be too highly applauded : nay, it is incumbent on every honest man to acknowledge, that unless these principles are duly main-

maintained and encouraged, no real liberty can exist.

BUT whenever men lose sight of temperance and discretion, these principles soon degenerate into the most dangerous nuisances, and are apt to lead them into the most fatal excesses,

HITHERTO the internal peace of the nation has not been materially disturbed by the notions which a licentious interpretation of republican tenets has so widely diffused; but the moderate and discerning part of the British community will not, it is presumed, differ much in opinion, if it should be asserted, that to the injudicious and indiscriminate inculcation of republican principles the calamities of the present war and the loss of America may in a very great measure be ascribed.

WHILE people contented themselves with railing at Ministries, and reprobating their measures, little or no harm could result to the state. It may even be questioned, whether this temper, however ungenerous and illiberal in itself, may not, upon investigation, be attended with more utility than detriment to the Public.

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BUT as virtuous and vicious qualities are equally progressive, this inquisitive disposition, however laudable and useful in its nature, meeting with too unguarded an indulgence, precipitated men into pursuits which at first they never intended. From the examination and censure of men and measures, they imperceptibly suffered themselves to be led away by groundless notions, that the authority and official power with which they were invested, and which they converted into instruments of abuse and misdemeanour, ought for that reason not only to be wrested from their hands, but also to be abolished and intrusted to no individual whatever.

THESE ideas, in men of a speculative turn and little practical knowledge, soon attained a maturity of strength sufficient to render them inimical to the form of government established in this country. During a considerable series of years, no objects presented themselves on which to realize these ideas : the prosperity of the nation at home, and its reputation abroad, afforded them no handle for any thing more than bare speculation.

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MEANWHILE they did not omit, as much as in them lay, to spread far and wide the pernicious tenets, of the rectitude of which they were intimately persuaded. These tenets, though slowly, yet constantly gained ground; and though their abettors did not chuse explicitly to avow them, it was evident enough they had numerous partisans, and that upon any emergency they would be diffusively espoused and warmly maintained.

THE good-sense and moderation of the majority of people in this country, has long been averse to their admission. The miseries produced by them a century ago, are often reflected upon; and we do not seem in the least inclined to tread in the footsteps of our ancestors, whom nothing but dear-bought experience could cure of the infatuation of changing the monarchy into a commonwealth.

BUT in default of the British nation, a spacious field was opened to the views of the republican party, in our Colonies. Founded on the broadest basis of levelling principles, these flourishing settlements seemed to invite another trial of skill in favour of that object which was uppermost in their thoughts, the erecting a state purely republican,
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and wherein every trace of monarchy should be utterly abolished.

How far they have succeeded in their views, time only can discover. The situation of the British Colonies in America, now become Independent States, is such, that the wisest politicians can by no means form the least conjecture, in relation to the future contingencies that may befall them. Their constitution is at present republican; but whether it will continue so in all of them, is a point which will admit of much dispute.

Thus much may be said of them, that their distance will prove a security against foreign invasions : it was the chief bulwark against all the efforts of Great Britain. But of this they may rest assured, that though they have now obtained a name and rank among the nations, they never again will enjoy that tranquility and happiness among themselves, which excited the admiration of all who formerly visited that part of the world.

BUT allowing that the American republics may flourish, while each of them continues in a state
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of mediocrity, the adherents to a republican system of government should consider, that what may suit a people shut up in narrow boundaries, may not be equally fitted for a populous nation inhabiting a large country.

It is principally on this ground that judicious men have in general combated the idea of a commonwealth; and it is purely on this principle, that we should strenuously resist all those who betray a predilection for that form of government, in so extensive a tract of ground as the Island of Great-Britain.

IN the formation of governments, men have not in general been led by much deliberation. Accidents have usually determined the fate of nations: still, however, it is peculiarly observable, that, the more potent and considerable a nation has proved, the remoter its constitution has been from that of a commonwealth.

IF we consult ancient history, we find most of the great and powerful nations governed by monarchs, and chiefly the smaller formed into republics. We shall also find, that as soon as any

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republic became considerable, it gradually verged into a monarchy, or was ruined by factions : the first was the case of Rome ; the second, that of Carthage.

MAY we not infer from thence, that not only the genius of a nation, but also its numerical proportion, and the extent of the country it inhabits, will greatly determinè the form of its government?

THERE seems to be a kind of instinct throughout mankind, which leads them to embrace that constitution which best befits them. Seldom has a large nation adopted, or long remained a commonwealth : as rarely has a small number of men be-thought themselves of erecting a monarchy, or long continued it.

SECURITY or power being the ends of government, that form which most effectually contributes to either, will of course be sought, according to the different aims of the community. A large multitude naturally feels its strength, and inclines to the augmentation of its power : a small body covets nothing further than its own safety. From these different motives, the first must and will

will have chiefs and commanders ; the second will, on the contrary, aim at no more than peaceable regulations to ensure its tranquility ; which may be easily effected by the establishment of a magistracy to execute the laws that shall be agreed upon for that purpose.

THE truth is, that public felicity being the main object in the institution of all governments, it behoves us to chuse, not that which best pleases our fancy, but that which experience proves to be most properly adapted to our situation and circumstances.

ACCORDING to this rule, an impartial man will be guided in his examination, not by speculative enquiries into the nature and rights of man taken abstractedly, but by historical researches into the various modes of government adopted in different countries by divers nations. He will weigh and compare local and temporary circumstances, and by them will enable himself to pronounce on the wisdom or imprudence displayed in the choice of a constitution ; but most probably he will discover that governments almost always arose from a concatenation of events that necessarily concurred to form them ; and that the actual situation of men

and their affairs led them imperceptibly to submit to the many systems which have by turns prevailed throughout the world.

It appears on the whole, that numbers and locality have commonly decided which of the two constitutions to make choice of, a monarchical or a republican. This is no less verified by history, than by adverting to the present state of mankind in most countries.

Nothing can be of greater importance to a nation, than to avoid the committing of errors in matters relating to its constitution. In the regulation of commercial affairs, the settlement of its police, and even the making of war and peace, tho' mistakes often happen, they may be rectified with tolerable facility. All nations have their sunshine as well as their cloudy days, and the good fortune and wisdom of one period remedies the defects and calamities of another; but it is not so easy to cure the evil of a bad government. This, like a radical, inveterate complaint in the human body, which lasts while life endures, can only terminate with a total change of the system; an object highly difficult to compass, when we consider how many
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are concerned and interested in opposing such a change, and with what danger it is always attended to the innovators.

LET us therefore be thoroughly certain that the constitution of a country is fundamentally erroneous, ere we proceed to an alteration in such things as affect the nature of its government. The smallest deviation from what has been long established, leads often widely astray from the mark proposed. There are few mistakes in these matters that can be called trifling. The Roman proverb should be continually before the eyes of those politicians who are desirous of such changes : they cannot too strongly be convinced, that *parva saepe scintilla contempta magnum excitavit incendium*, often has a small neglected spark occasioned a great conflagration. In the same manner, the most dreadful dissensions and the most astonishing revolutions have originated from apparently the slightest causes.

INFLUENCED by such weighty motives, let us call in the help of the most vigilant circumspection, whenever it is thought proper to give ear to such as propose reformatations in the state.

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NATURE and experience have seemingly gone hand in hand thro' the succession of ages, in pointing out what forms of government were most desirable, and would best answer the purposes of society, according to the various fluctuations of circumstances incident to human affairs.

NEVER can we make a better use of history than by employing it to elucidate a position, the establishing of which is of so much consequence.

ROME and Carthage have already been adduced as proofs of the impracticability of an extensive state remaining a commonwealth, and preserving its internal peace. Conformably to this idea, we find it was only while they continued in a situation of mediocrity, that the happiness of States has generally been best consulted by a republican form of government. Ancient Greece furnishes ample proofs of this assertion.

WHENEVER, thro' the acquisition of larger territories, their dimensions swelled beyond their primeval proportion; whenever they became possessed of great riches and power, we shall constantly observe, that the notions, manners, and pursuits of men underwent an equal alteration; and that soon
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or late their government partook of the change, and either subsided into a monarchy, or became, thro' its interior dissensions, the prey of some more powerful invader.

THUS Athens, after having flourished a long time, while her strength and opulence were moderate, as soon as she had attained to a high degree of riches and pre-eminence, involved herself in continual disputes, and in a restless variety of attempts to domineer over all her neighbours; the consequence of which was a speedy decline, and at length a total destruction of her power and liberty.

THEBES, in like manner, had no sooner reached that summit of consideration to which she was lifted by the superior genius of her Epaminondas, than she was, shortly after the loss of this celebrated man, brought to irretrievable ruin thro' her pride and imprudence.

LACEDEMON affords another instance of the same kind. After having triumphed over Athens, her long-dreaded rival, she excited thro' her haughtiness a confederacy, that soon put an end to the dominion she had assumed over her neighbours,

bours, and reduced her to a condition of inconsiderableness from which she never recovered.

FROM these and other examples that might be cited, it appears that middling circumstances are best suited to a commonwealth; and that an extension of power only serves to alter the very spirit and nature of those who live under such a constitution, and to urge them on to pursuits, which cannot in the end prove otherwise than destructive to their freedom.

It has with great truth been said, that *nunquam aliud natura, aliud experientia dixit*, truth and experience never hold a different language. Never was that saying better proved than in the application that may be made of it to the present subject.

THE experience of modern times comes invariably in aid of the past. The republics now subsisting are all of moderate power and consideration; and if at any time they have become eminent and conspicuous, it has been to their great danger and detriment.

THE two principal republics that now figure in Europe are those of Venice and Holland. The
first

first of these, thro' industry, œconomy, and the almost exclusive commerce of Europe during several centuries, grew immensely opulent; but the moment she suffered the lust of dominion to take possession of her councils, she bewildered herself in a multiplicity of schemes which brought her to the brink of perdition, and obliged her to revert to her primitive maxims, in order to insure her preservation.

HOLLAND experienced precisely the same perils, when at the height of her elevation in the last century. Elated with successes obtained thro' the countenance of those Powers, whose interest had induced, them to favour and second her efforts to emancipate herself from the tyranny of Spain, she ventured to treat them with a freedom and boldness which they could not brook: they, in return, conspired her destruction; and would have effected it, had not the jealousies inseparable from the intercourse between great and rival nations, broken the union that had been framed to compass her ruin.

SINCE that dangerous epocha, the Dutch have been very careful to give no sort of umbrage to any of their powerful neighbours. The wisest

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heads of that State have long seen the necessity of restraining themselves within moderate bounds, conscious that any further augmentation of power might prove detrimental to their present constitution. But even in their actual circumstances, they are far from being secure from a revolution in their government. Their wealth is known to be immense, and their territories are sufficiently extensive to form a monarchy, especially when we reflect how full they are of inhabitants.

THE consideration which renders a surmise of this kind far from improbable is, that for many years past they have been split into factions, of which the violence is greatly augmented of late, and which threaten to terminate, as most internal dissensions do in rich and populous countries, in a revolution in favour of some great and resolute chief of one of the contending parties.

WHAT chiefly adds to the probability of such an event is, that the government of Holland scarcely deserves the name of a republic. It has long been transformed into an aristocracy; and tho', through the moderation of the ruling men, the administration is carried on with great wisdom and discretion, and no kind of haughtiness or oppression

pression is exercised, yet it is visible to all, that the public authority is lodged in the hands of some great families exclusively, and that the democratical part of the constituents is of little weight.

ANOTHER motive inclining one to imagine that a revolution of this nature will happen, is the inherent attachment of the people of Holland to the House of Orange. This attachment is chiefly found in the middling and lower classes. Sensible that they have no chance of participating in the honours and emoluments of government, and yet looking on themselves as equally entitled with those who are, through family-connections, promoted to them, they necessarily look on these with an eye of displeasure and jealousy: they are, of course, disposed to bring them, if possible, to the same level with themselves, by conferring the supreme command upon one, who shall be superior to all, and whose rank and authority shall entirely eclipse and absorb the power and pretensions of the Patrician classes.

HOLLAND has more than once been on the point of having a Sovereign. William, the second Stadtholder of that name, aided by the in-

trigues of the partizans of his family, as well as by a numerous military, had nearly succeeded. Had not Death taken him off shortly after his first attempt, he probably would have taken surer measures in a second.

THE moderation alone of our William the Third, son to the preceding, and Stadtholder, prevented him from assuming the sovereignty. The generality of people were so discontented with their governors, and so exasperated at the conduct of the De Wits and their adherents, that it would have been easy, at that period, for William to have converted the republic into a monarchy; to say nothing of the assistance he would have received, and was even proffered by the Courts of both England and France.

THERE is another commonwealth in Europe, which, tho' professing perpetual peace with all its neighbours, nourishes in its bosom a power, that probably will, in time, not only swallow up every other portion of which this commonwealth is composed, but, in all appearance, will finally occasion its subjection to a Sovereign. Unless the wisdom and foresight of the Helvetic body can find means to defeat a design which is
evident

evident to all the clear-sighted, the superior growth of strength, and daily increasing ascendancy of the Canton of Berne will shortly enable it to give laws to all the rest. Riches, population, addition of territory, all threaten to throw into the hands of this province such an accession of might, as the other members of the general union shall not be able to withstand. The consequence will necessarily be, that, from the aristocratical disposition of the ruling men in this Canton, discontents and dissensions must be produced, which will, in all likelihood, conclude in the loss of the liberties of Switzerland.

THESE various instances strongly militate in favour of those maxims and principles which have been advanced on the subject in question. But we need not go out of our own country to be convinced, by the most evident proofs, that a republican form of government is utterly inconsistent with the temper, disposition, and interest, of a great and powerful people.

If we look back to the last century, what efforts were not made by the republican party in England to settle their favourite system among us ! If ever that stood a fair chance to be
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successfully maintained, it was undoubtedly by such men as then undertook it; *Si Pergama dextra defendi possent, etiam hac defensa fuissent.*

WHEN we review the celebrated characters which occupied the scene of public affairs at that time, well may the abettors of republican principles despair of ever seeing again such a formidable assemblage in their favour.

EXCLUSIVE of their personal talents, their courage, their integrity and zeal, their unanimity, their indefatigableness in the pursuit of this grand object, they were masters of advantages, which every lover of this country, and its real liberty, would sorely lament to behold in the possession of such as profess the like principles.

THEY had, through conduct, through valour, through invincible perseverance, surmounted every obstacle, and overturned every barrier that stood between them and the objects at which they had aimed. They had overcome and put to death the Monarch who opposed them; they had ruined his party, and abolished the very office of King; they had destroyed the ecclesiastical system, which they looked upon as its main support; they had anni-

annihilated the power of the nobility, and almost the rank of nobles ; they had reduced to obedience and dread of their authority every part of the three kingdoms ; they had, in short, suppressed every shadow of resistance at home, and had spread the terror of their arms over lands and seas ; they were respected, they were feared, they were courted every where ; in a word, they had obtained the summit of their wishes, and had, in their own persuasions, erected a Colossus of republican government, which they believed immovably fixed in this Island, and built upon foundations that neither time nor accidents could ever have shaken.

If ever the expectations of men were deceived, it was in the sudden fall of this stupendous edifice, erected with so much pains and labour, framed with such care and circumspection, and cemented with so much of the best blood in these nations.

Its duration was so short, as scarcely to furnish a date in history. Notwithstanding the acknowledged abilities of its friends and supporters, it fell to the ground almost as it were of itself. The daring and resolute hand of the principal servant of this republican community, dashed it

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to pieces at the first blow; and so complete was its ruin, that it never rose from the fall.

THIS undaunted chieftain, having seized the reins of government, restored, in fact, the monarchy he had so violently contributed to destroy. Like Sylla, he was thoroughly convinced, that the confusion of the times admitted of no remedy but the supreme power of one; and he could not be accused of vanity, in thinking that no man was fitter to rule in the midst of storms and whirlwinds than himself.

THE truth was, that the minds of men, however they might have been soured by the mismanagement of the late king and his ministers, still retained a veneration for a monarchy so happily distinguished from all others by the excellent laws and maxims which regulated it, and by the prosperity the nation had so long enjoyed while it subsisted.

THE generality of people, though reasonably enough dissatisfied with the conduct of their monarch, did by no means wish to carry their punishment of him to the length it was done. It was with great truth that General Fairfax's lady cried

cried out from the box wherein she sat at Westminster-hall, during the king's trial, that not a tenth part of the English were for that measure.

To speak impartially, notwithstanding the fate of Charles has by numbers, even of the adherents to royalty, been looked upon as a just consequence of his bad government, the English at that period, however exasperated they might be at his misconduct, foresaw the consequences of taking so severe a revenge upon him; and while the republicans, out of hatred to the crown, destroyed the prince that wore it, the royalists would have saved him, were it only to have preserved the office of King from destruction.

BUT it was in vain to contend against the general sense of so large a nation. The factions and parties of all denominations that teemed as it were throughout the land, the bold and undaunted spirit that animated their respective leaders, the commotions daily occasioned through their ambitious designs, the disorder into which all public affairs were thrown, the continual changes of men and measures that were almost daily taking place at the very helm of the state, all these taught people to look for more effectual remedies

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than those which were propounded, and had so long and so unsuccessfully been tried by the partizans of a commonwealth.

THEY were now convinced by woeful experience, of the weakness and instability of a government contrary to the inclinations of the majority, and founded on the speculations of the few, in contradiction to the wishes of the many: they felt the enormous impropriety of subverting a long-established system, for the substitution of a new one by way of experiment: they were fully conscious of the absurdity of suppressing royalty, for the errors and misdemeanors committed by an imprudent and ill-advised sovereign: they saw the necessity of trusting no longer to those who had led them into so many difficulties; who by their incessant disputes and disagreements among themselves had propagated a spirit of disunion, enmity, and rancour, throughout the nation; and who were consequently very unfit to restore peace and unanimity to a people whom they distracted, and rent into so many pieces through their own divisions.

So truly were the wisest heads, even of the republican party, persuaded of the propriety of
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having recourse to one supreme ruler for the re-establishment of public tranquillity, that we find no opposition given to Cromwell, but by the enthusiastic part of that faction : the others were duly satisfied of the rectitude of the measure ; and those among them who were noted for the soundest understanding, not only applauded, but unreservedly and explicitly advised him to assume the title and dignity of King.

How small the attachment of the English nation was to a republic, even in the most triumphant period of its existence, is strongly perceptible in the performances written at that time ; but in none perhaps so visibly as in those of Whitelock. This celebrated adherent and confident of Cromwell, in his well-known conference with him, bears ample testimony to the spirit then prevailing among the English. He represents them as unalienably fond of monarchy, and very unwilling to yield obedience to any other sort of government ; he enters into a very circumstantial detail of every motive and reason for their preference of monarchy ; he shews, in a masterly manner, how judiciously the monarchical constitution settled in England is adapted to the disposition of the people ; and how impossible it would be to divest

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them of their affections for their ancient government; he advises Cromwell by no means to think of attempting to work a change in their minds; he warns him of the danger of running counter to the tide of popular inclinations and opinions; and concludes by exhorting him to assume, without scruple or hesitation, the supreme direction of public affairs.

THE calamities occasioned by the civil wars in England made so deep an impression on its inhabitants, and the confusion that had incessantly reigned during the existence of the commonwealth had so effectually cured them of any partiality for that form of government, that on the death of Cromwell, all parties expressed their weariness of the uncertain and perplexed situation they had so long experienced. However discordant in their other principles, they seemed cordially to agree in the expediency of putting a final period to the distractions of the times, by restoring the kingly government. Their natural feelings carried them back to that state, in which, with whatever inconveniencies it was attended, they had never felt those horrible pressures and vexations, which they found inseparable from the condition
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they were in. They determined therefore to exchange it for another, which, at all hazards, could not be worse; and which they had every reasonable inducement to promise themselves would prove a better.

THESE salutary resolves brought about the restoration of monarchy, together with a firm resolution never to abolish it in future. The English may be said, on this occasion, to have reverted to their ancient form of government, as a traveller who has deviated from the track well known to him, is glad to recover it again.

IT was a curious sight to the intelligent, as Montesquieu somewhere observes, to behold the multitude of parties and factions with which England abounded at that æra, broken asunder and dissolved thro' mere lassitude, and peaceably agreeing to submit to their former government and laws, after having spilt so much blood to oppose and subvert them.

NATURE, it may be asserted, dictated to them this renovation. Little reflexion was necessary to shew that usages and habits founded on the practice

tice of ages, were more familiar to their ideas, and more acceptable to their feelings, than maxims and regulations to which they had so long been utter strangers.

So deeply rooted became the determination at no rate to admit of the demolition of monarchy, that, notwithstanding the infamous conduct of Charles the Second, no ideas were ever entertained of treating him like his father, tho' most certainly his character was far more reprehensible.

CHARLES the First did unquestionably endeavour to raise himself to a degree of power and controul highly prejudicial to the liberties of the nation; but he did not meanly betray its interest, and sacrifice its welfare to foreign princes: on the contrary, he displayed at all times a warm attachment to the honour and good of his kingdom; and lost no opportunity of consulting its advantages, in his intercourse with the other potentates of Europe.

BUT his son resembled him only in the unmeritorious part of his character. He fought with no less earnestness, tho' with more craft and dissimulation,

tion, to become uncontrollable and absolute. To this purpose he basely became a pensioner to France; and if anecdotes may be credited, forgot his own rank and dignity so far, and harboured such degrading thoughts, as to declare that he had rather be dependent on the bounty of the King of France (Louis the Fourteenth) than on the liberality of his own subjects; words which alone proclaimed him unworthy of the diadem, which the affection and benevolence of the English nation had so undeservedly placed upon his head.

THIS is not the place to recapitulate the numerous meannesses of his inglorious reign. Many as they were, it is sufficient for our present purpose to take notice, that they were not able to shake the resolution of his subjects never again to overturn the throne, for the sake of punishing its possessor. They contented themselves with a moderate opposition to such measures as immediately affected their freedom, and may even be said to have acted rather with too much remissness and negligence than became them in such essential points: but their dread of renewing the horrors of his father's days, may be pleaded as an excuse for their forbearing to make so vigorous a stand as they ought
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to have done, especially in the latter part of his reign.

THE same principles of moderation prevailed under his successor. It was possibly the reliance upon this disposition in his people which engaged James to throw off all reserves, and to make those incroachments that forced his subjects, however unwillingly, to divest him of an authority which he exercised so unworthily.

BUT while they dethroned the King, they did not expel royalty; they were too wise not to discriminate between the office and the abuse of it; the idea of a commonwealth did not enter into the thoughts of those who effected the Revolution. The suggestions of some inconsiderable speculators at the time passed unregarded, and hardly noticed. Whatever had the least tendency to such measures, had too long been exploded by the majority of sensible people, to make the least impression.

DURING the reign of William the Third, the spirit of liberty flamed high, and animated the people of these nations to make those efforts in the common cause of Europe, that stopped the progress

progress of that ambitious Prince Louis the Fourteenth of France.

THE reign of Queen Anne was still more glorious. Nothing could exceed the reputation which the arms and councils of this kingdom obtained throughout the world, from the surprising and uninterrupted series of victories and successes which grace that period of the British annals.

It must, however, be confessed, that during these two reigns, thro' the licentiousness of thinking which began to prevail, the republican spirit and principles began also to revive, and occasioned in many individuals a renewal of the partiality for that form of government which had formerly been productive of so much mischief.

THOUGH this groundless and unreasonable partiality could not, from a variety of causes, spread itself in this kingdom in an open, avowed manner, yet it met with too many abettors.

SINCE that period to the present, it has been silently gaining ground. The truth is, that in proportion as men recede from the spot of danger, they are less upon their guard; so the greater

the distance of time becomes from the date of their hardships and misfortunes, the apter they are to forget them, together with the causes from which they originated.

THIS may partly account for the acceptance which republican principles have found of late years among some classes of individuals, who certainly have no right to complain of want of lenity and moderation in those who are invested with the power of the state, any more than of severity and oppression in the spirit of the constitution itself.

BUT such is human nature, especially in nations that enjoy so much real freedom as is to be found in Great-Britain. Unrestrained, unfettered in their notions, men are at liberty, in this happy Island, to carry their researches into the nature of things as far as their faculties will enable them. There is no subject, human or divine, which they are forbidden to investigate. Hence it is, that, emboldened with the consciousness of personal safety, they venture deeply into every matter that offers; and are prompted to range, uncontrouled by fears, and unappalled by difficulties, wherever their imaginations lead them.

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It were to be wished that men could, before they engage in such arduous undertakings as those wherein the mind is chiefly concerned, ascertain the extent of their intellectual powers, with the same exactness with which they are able to calculate their bodily strength. Every man can tell *quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recusent*, the weight that his shoulders will bear; but few know the compass and limits of their understanding.

From this cause proceed those frequent errors in capital matters, which they cannot fail to commit, who strive to reach higher than their capacities will permit them. No individuals are apter to run into the grossest mistakes and absurdities, than such as addict themselves to speculations, without having prepared themselves by previous practice in some part of the business on which they propose to exercise their thoughts.

There are, indeed, various topics which must be allowed to be purely speculative; such as divinity and metaphysical disquisitions: on these mankind may speculate for ever, without arriving at any clear and undisputable discoveries. Neither is it of any consequence to society, how far they may stray from the point, while employed

in the search of truths, the precise knowledge of which must necessarily remain concealed from mankind in their present state.

BUT there are truths, on the other hand, which are of the highest importance to be well known, and clearly understood. Such are the moral ties of society, and the policy that is requisite for its formation and good government.

THE science of politics, tho' ascertainable in all its branches, is one of those parts of human knowledge which require much study and application, ere we can attain to a tolerable degree of perfection in them; yet it so happens, that almost every one thinks himself qualified to be a judge in all political occurrences, however difficult and intricate.

THERE is not most assuredly any business demanding more capacity, attention, diligence, and study, than that of politics. What Cicero says of the qualifications that are necessary to form a complete orator, is perfectly applicable to a politician: he ought to be conversant in every kind of liberal knowledge; he ought to be thoroughly acquainted

acquainted with men and things ; he ought to have seen, to have heard, and to have read, an immense variety of characters, of transactions, and of performances, before he presumes to deem himself competent to the task of deciding, with any degree of sagacity, on the manifold subjects of discussion which are daily starting up in the political world.

THE labours of a whole life are not over-sufficient to store a man's mind with a fund of observations adequate to his wants in this extensive province. Fresh combinations without end, like those in algebraic researches, are perpetually occurring in this interminable field. Whatever experience years may have been long collecting, whatever surprising incidents we may have witnessed ourselves, or learned from others, we are never sure but that they may be still exceeded by those which are yet to come.

THE most important consideration in the study of politics is, that theory alone is the worst of all guides. Men who gather their knowledge from books only, may possibly discourse, or even write agreeably, upon the subject ; but no people are
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more liable to be deceived themselves, and to mislead others. Sense and genius are not enough to enable a man to shine and to be useful at the same time : he must have practised a multitude of other methods ; he must have dwelt a considerable part of his days in the busy scenes of life ; he must have extensively conversed with individuals of various countries and professions ; he must have dedicated some of his best years to travel, and have been peculiarly assiduous in mixing with all companies, and all classes, the only sure and direct means of obtaining solid information. Pride, in this case, is the greatest obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge. He that travels without a full determination to overcome the niceties of birth, rank, and other conceits of personal vanity, may keep undoubtedly very splendid and elegant company ; but these are not the sources from which he will derive those instructions which ought to be the principal aim of those who visit foreign parts.

WHEN to this practical collection of actual, living examples and transactions, is superadded that share of activity, which every one that means to be a politician ought to contribute in person
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to the common stock of public affairs, then indeed he may, without impropriety, call in the help of speculation : he will then be prepared to profit by his reading, and will know how to apply the infinity of rules and maxims that books are crouded with, to those passages of active life wherein he has been personally interested ; without which application he will know but imperfectly, and by halves, in what manner they are to be understood and carried into use.

THE rules above laid down for the study of politics, are, it is presumed, clear and incontestible : the great politicians of antiquity, and of modern ages, have all been formed upon this plan : the ancient, especially, were indefatigable in pursuing it. The Legislators and Statesmen of Greece were particularly assiduous in gathering all the experience and information possible, by travelling into every country, and consulting all people that were famed for knowledge and improvements ; they spared neither expence nor personal toil and trouble upon these occasions ; they undertook long voyages ; they visited the remotest states and nations, in order to qualify themselves for those
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stations, in which they proposed to be of public utility to their countrymen.

WHEN all these things are taken into consideration, we should be extremely upon our guard, how far we suffer ourselves to pay attention to those who presume, without a requisite portion of these indispensable requisites, to deliver their opinions on political matters.

ONE of the greatest politicians in the last century, was so well apprised of the many qualities necessary to compose one, that he could not brook that the Court, over the affairs of which he presided with so much splendour and success, should admit into its service any man in whom practice and theory, learning and personal experience, were not equally united.

THIS was the celebrated Oxenstiern, Prime Minister of Sweden during the triumphant reign of Gustavus Adolphus, and the subsequent one of his daughter Christina. So impartially was he determined to make use of none but men of complete abilities, that he sacrificed all considerations of country and parentage to the laudable purpose

pose of filling the great departments of the state with individuals of avowed abilities. Where the natives of the kingdom he governed were deficient, he made no scruple to substitute foreigners of proper eminence and qualifications. To this method of acting much of the glories of his administration were unquestionably due.

In this he followed the example of his illustrious master, whose court and armies were a receptacle for all the men of parts and courage from every State in Christendom. Gustavus was so sensible of the vast advantages resulting from the union of study and travel, that all his ministers and agents, in the important negotiations and intercourse he carried on with so many Princes and States, were indiscriminately chosen by him out of every country that produced them. Superiority of talents alone decided his choice. The truth was, that he hearkened to the voice of conscious experience. He had himself improved the great abilities he had received from Nature, by an arduous course of studious application and travelling in various parts of Europe, before he entered that career in which he became so famous and formidable, and acted so noble and heroic a part.

WE cannot, therefore, be too careful and ready to discountenance those men, who, confiding in the unsubstantial and airy ruminations of their solitary theories, imagine, that without stirring out of their closets, they are able to instruct mankind in the arts of government.

THE best way of shewing such men their own absurdity, would be to treat them as Henry the Fourth of France did one of that fraternity; who, on presenting him with a plan of reformati^ons, was desired by the King to acquaint him with his past life, profession, and place of residence. Upon being informed that he was a practitioner of the law in a country-town, where he had always dwelled, the King turned to his courtiers, and begged that some one of them, who had never been there, would give him an account of the abuses committed by the lawyers who were settled in that place.

DIVERS, if not most of those who meddle most warmly with such matters, are men of this description. It is principally among such in England that republican principles are fostered. Were we to enquire into the situation of such men, we should usually find they are unhappily
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secluded from that intercourse which would open their minds, and free their ideas from that contractedness which leads them to condemn men and measures, without attending to times and circumstances.

FULL of those ideas with which a natural love of liberty inspires all men, and having heated their imaginations with those passages in their reading, that represent the oppressions of tyranny, and the felicity of living free from such apprehensions, they conclude the best security that man can have recourse to, is to suffer no one to fall under the temptation of exercising unlimited power, and therefore that no man should be invested with supreme sovereignty.

THE common error of such men is to confound liberty with equality. When they are informed of the haughtiness and arrogance of the nobles in foreign parts, they infer, the only cure to prevent men from domineering over others, is to place them all upon a level; and that nothing but parity of rank will cure society of the inconveniences resulting from distinctions that are made by birth and titles.

THESE are the general notions on which persons of a republican cast among us have founded their aversion to monarchy ; and from these originate the many particular inferences they form in favour of a contrary system. They seem to be totally ignorant, that without crowns or coronets there are numberless ways of arriving at, and exercising, the most oppressive and arbitrary power.

BUT without combating at present their speculations with our own, let us proceed, as we have begun, in opposing to them what is of infinitely more weight, facts and transactions, which elucidate the nature and dispositions of men better than all reasonings, and point out at once what opinions to form on the matter in debate.

LET them, if they can, reflect without indignation, how horribly this term of liberty has been abused and distorted, in order to fit it to the passions and extravagancies of mankind, in different countries and nations. The Greeks and the Romans, who claim the precedence in the annals of Liberty, were in fact the greatest tyrants upon earth. Such was their pride and arrogance, that

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in the enumeration of the inhabitants of their respective cities and dominions, they disdained to reckon those unfortunate individuals, whom the chance of war and other unpropitious casualties had put into their hands, or whom they had purchased from such as traded in that commodity; at which, by the bye, human nature seemed less apt to revolt in those Countries of Liberty, as they are affectedly called, than in the most arbitrary monarchies in Christendom at this present day.

NEITHER were these assertors of freedom more inclined to humanity even to each other. Nothing was more common than to reduce a citizen to bondage, especially in cases of debt; whence it sometimes fell out, that a great part of the community was enslaved to the other. This often happened at Rome in particular, and occasioned those popular commotions that mark their character with such features of unfeelingness and oppression, and fill their history with such frequent scenes of domestic calamity.

WHAT could therefore the common classes be in states where so little value was set on the native dignity of human nature? What prerogatives

tives could they boast of, where they stood upon such uncertain ground, relatively to those to whom they lay under pecuniary obligations, and who could at any time enforce the demands of payment with a severity that left their debtors wholly at their mercy?

BUT, exclusive of the inconveniencies arising from debt, what condition can we figure to ourselves the inferior sorts were in among the Romans particularly, when we recollect with what humble assiduity clients waited upon their patrons with their *sportulas*, baskets, in their hands, to receive what donations these lordlings might think proper to bestow on them? Now it is well known, that the Roman people were in a manner divided into clients and patrons; which sufficiently indicates what kind of liberty subsisted among them.

THERE doubtless were exceptions to this description of the Roman commonalty, chiefly among those classes that dwelt in the country and cultivated the lands; but such appears to have been the situation of the people at Rome in general, tools and subservients to the richer citizens,
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and ready at all times to act by their impulse: at which we need not wonder, when we consider the multitudes that were not only fed, but even in some measure clad, by the great and opulent families. It is recorded of Lucullus, that he gave away at one time five thousand cloaks, or what we would call furtouts, or great coats, among his dependents.

NOR do the Athenians seem to have differed much from the Romans in these matters, when we advert to the frequent treats given by the affluent to the inferior sort, and the largeesses in money or in cloaths dealt out among the needy citizens, and which were often made a matter of reproach, as proceeding rather from sinister views than motives of generosity. Athens, too, had its Lucullus's, who were not less sparing of their favours to the croud. Cymon, the son to the great Miltiades, was equally at least, if not more liberal than that Roman. His attendants, whenever he walked out, were loaded with cloaths to distribute among such as wanted them; and his orchards and gardens were constantly open to all comers.

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FROM these incidents we may lawfully conclude, that both the Greeks and the Romans made much more noise about their liberty than it deserved, as it evidently appears to have been restricted to a very inconsiderable portion of society. When to their immense number of slaves we add those tribes of poor and indebted citizens that swarmed among them, and who were absolutely dependent on the opulent, either for support, or forbearance to execute the rigour of the laws against debtors, will any impartial observer deny, that such a people were under the dominion of the most absolute masters, and that however the appellation did not exist, still the government was in fact an aristocracy ?

Nothing proves this more powerfully than the fruitless endeavour of the people to establish an Agrarian law, and the necessity the Roman commonalty were under, to have recourse to the institution of Tribunes, to protect them from the insolence and oppression of the upper classes ; a remedy which became worse than the disease, as from the irresistible authority with which they felt themselves invested, the Tribunes themselves
were

were enabled to exercise a fatal controul upon all classes. They accordingly filled the city with everlasting broils and factions, which terminated at last in the total loss of that liberty of which they were intended to be the chief support.

AT Athens, the preponderance of the wealthy part of the citizens was so manifest, and the pressures of the subordinate ranks so undeniable, that even so early as the days of Solon himself, in the infancy of the Athenian democracy, as it is termed, when it should seem that the spirit of such a constitution would be most prevalent, it was reproached to that celebrated legislator, that the laws he had framed for his countrymen were mere cobwebs for the rich, wherein the poor would entangle themselves, and be devoured by them.

FROM passages of this nature, it is not, perhaps, unfair to conclude, that a pure and real democracy is a thing hardly attainable; and that wherever there is not a visible and avowed chief, authorised and appointed by the constitution, there will always and inevitably be an undue influence, either open or concealed, exerted over the public, under various pretences, by the principal mem-

bers of the state ; or else, what is still more pernicious, it will be convulsed with parties and factions ; the invariable destiny of all States which have wanted a supreme hand to hold the balance of power between the various orders that compose it.

THESE passages also remind one of a truth, which is not sufficiently inculcated, and of which it is no small importance to be apprised, in the midst of those vehement declamations that fill the mouths of modern admirers of ancient liberty : this truth is, that there is more genuine and substantial liberty in Europe at this present day, than ever was the happy lot of mankind before in this quarter of the globe.

IN France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and the Low Countries, the inhabitants enjoy the full and unlimited disposition of their persons and properties, saving only that obedience which is exacted by the Sovereign ; and which, tho' occasionally enforced in an arbitrary manner, is generally regulated by known laws and usages. It were, indeed, to be wished, for the good of humanity, that such a constitution as is established in our
happy

happy Island, prevailed in like manner every where ; but let us, in the mean time, rejoice to find the ferocity of ancient times abated, and every denomination of men in the countries enumerated, possessing, without exception, all the rights of humanity in the private affairs of life, and subject only to the accidental restraints that flow from an unhappy excess of power in their rulers.

It is with grief one is obliged to except from this description the Northern parts of Europe. Denmark and Sweden, the first especially, still retain that villenage and slavery of the lower, and particularly the rustic, classes, which is so disgraceful to mankind. In the first of those countries, however, it has in some respects been considerably mitigated ; and in the second, bids fair to be totally abolished. But in Russia and Poland it reigns in all its horrors : the commonalty is held in the most degrading contempt ; and the peasantry are as much the appurtenance of the lands and fields they cultivate, as the cattle that graze in them.

THIS cruel usage ought by no means to be imputed to the spirit that accompanies absolute power. The sovereigns of Russia and Poland are very differently circumstanced from each other; the one is despotic in the extreme, the other as much limited; yet the lower denominations of the community are equally oppressed in both countries. We can only ascribe, therefore, such unjust policy to the pride and avidity of the superior classes, which have in all times and in all countries been ready to improve every opportunity of oppressing the lower.

THE personal welfare of their subjects, and their freedom from servitude and oppression, has sometimes been much more sincerely consulted by sovereigns themselves than their ministers. A remarkable instance of this kind happened in France, during the reign of Lewis XIII. This monarch, tho' extremely jealous of his royal prerogatives, was so warm and zealous for the rights and prosperity of all individuals without discrimination, that it was with much difficulty the French ministry could obtain his consent to the admission of negroes into the islands they had newly settled in the West Indies, on the footing of slavery: his
conscience

conscience was very tender upon this article ; and he used often to declare, that he could not bear the thought of suffering any slaves in his dominions.

THIS benignity of disposition does more honour to his memory, than the mediocrity of his talents in other regards can injure it. He is not, however, the only prince whose feelings for his people were noble and magnanimous : his contemporary, the great Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, felt the necessity of acting paternally by his subjects, in a more enlightened manner, and proportionably to his sublime abilities. Though involved in a multiplicity of wars, he was continually framing plans for their domestic ease and benefit ; and exercised his pen upon these matters in his private retirements, no less successfully than his sword in the field.

WE need not, however, go out of our own times to find monarchs employed in these truly royal occupations. The Emperor, the Kings of Prussia and Sweden have given illustrious proofs of their just concern for the happiness of the lower ranks of their subjects, and of their earnest desire to
protect

protect them from the ill treatment of their superiors. But we cannot dismiss this subject without observing, that notwithstanding the known benevolence and humanity of the present King of Poland, it is utterly out of his power to imitate them. He may exercise these virtues, as much as he pleases, towards those who dwell on his hereditary lands and estates; but he must not dare to extend them beyond his own patrimony: he would exasperate a nobility, which, however humbled on all sides through means of its internal divisions, is nevertheless resolutely bent on the unhappy preservation of that tyrannical and tempestuous aristocracy, which has been, and will, in all probability, continue to be, the bane of that nation, until it has totally subverted it. But come destruction whenever it will, the ruling powers in Poland seem resolved to make good to the last, in its most fatal meaning, the expression which they so proudly use in their allusion to the power of other sovereigns: *Nos habemus reges, sed reges habent vos*: We have Kings, but Kings have you. This is the language in which they address themselves exultingly to other nations. The intimation is plain, and needs no explanation; but who that
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knows any thing of Poland, will say that it is well founded ?

AN inference fairly drawn from the preceding observations is, that in all republics, whether they are stiled aristocracies or democracies, there always starts up a power, small and unperceived perhaps at first, but which increases in spite of all precautions, and soon or late ingrosses the whole authority of the state, and not only deliberates, but executes without controul. Where these two functions are united, unless they are performed by the wisest heads, and exercised with perfect unanimity, they are the source of infinite mischief. It is not enough that men should possess abilities, they should also be free from discord ; which is rarely the case where a large number of individuals are invested with equal powers : jealousies and jar-rings seldom fail to arise, and usually produce the bitterest dissensions among them.

BUT should this factious combination refrain from mutual bickerings, its baneful consequences will be felt in the oppressive treatment of the other parts of the community : one of these two evils is sure to happen, and sometimes both. Thus at Venice,
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the artful confederacy of the leading men found means to concenter, by degrees, all power into their own hands; and by reducing the number of those who were to have any share in the government, converted it into the severest aristocracy. Thus the Polish nobles not only lord it over the rest of the nation, but are at perpetual variance among themselves, and almost always embroiling their country, more or less, in scenes of blood.

NOR can even the smallness of a State secure it from those convulsions which result from the defect of an equilibrium. The Grecian commonwealths of old, though very inconsiderable, were frequently plunged in the most sanguinary civil feuds. In later times, the Italian republics of Genoa, Sienna, Florence, and Pisa, exhibited the like scenes. Dantzick and Hamburgh, in the North of Europe, have not been exempt from them; and at this hour the city of Geneva, through the obstinacy of the two parties into which it is divided, and the extremities to which their disputes have been carried, has absolutely lost its liberties, and now lies at the mercy of those powers which have taken possession of it.

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BUT however dissensions may happen in a republic of narrow extent, they are much more liable to fall out in a large and populous country that is rich and flourishing. In a little State, it is easier to watch the motions of individuals, whom we cannot suppose to be powerful, and to repress the fallies of their ambition : for this reason, as a very limited share of authority will answer that purpose, a republican system of government is entirely adequate to the ruling of such a people. But in extensive tracts the case is widely different : here is a bolder range for aspiring and daring spirits ; riches and possessions of all kinds are incomparably more considerable ; and men require a tighter rein to curb their unruly passions : here, therefore, a quicker circulation of authority is requisite to preserve the body politic in due quiet, and to prevent disorders from rising to any height. The tedious forms of a republic will not act with sufficient expedition to effect this ; or the clashing interests of contrary factions will, as experience proves, oftener promote confusions than allay them. Is it not then much more eligible to constitute one supreme head in such a state, whose interest it must necessarily be to preserve the tranquillity of the public, and overawe those parties that would otherwise disturb it ? Is it not more

adviseable to arm him with such a degree of strength and power, as shall not only enable him to command respect and fear, but to execute his determinations without delay ?

ALL this may unquestionably be done, without investing him with a greater proportion of authority than is merely necessary to accomplish so salutary an end. But unless men will admit of such a sovereign umpire among them, a great nation will not only be filled with disputes, but these will ripen into dangerous factions, and these again into civil insurrections on both sides. Such is the never-failing progress of disagreements between the chief rulers of considerable nations, that have not adopted a monarchical plan ; or that have only permitted nominal Princes to wear their diadem, and have refused to trust them with that portion of sovereignty, without which their weight is of no signification in the scale of government.

ROME and Carthage may perhaps be cited as instances of populous nations forming a commonwealth. But we should consider that the Romans, for a long process of time, were little better than a numerous clan of fierce and rapacious men, united together chiefly for the purpose of invading the

the property of their neighbours : they sallied forth like robbers in quest of plunder, and might justly be looked upon as a set of banditti, led on by chieftains greedy of booty, and calculated for the command of desperadoes, much more than for the government of the citizens and subjects of an orderly state.

DURING the first ages of Rome, we cannot rely upon what historians, who lived at a remote distance from this period, have thought proper to commit to writing concerning that city and its inhabitants. From all that may be collected with any certainty, they were bold and enterprising, but of a turbulent humour at home, and a predatory disposition abroad : their government, such as it might be, was never settled and steady, and could hardly be defined by any decided appellation. From the time that rudeness and ignorance began to abate, and they became of some importance as a nation, the impracticability of reconciling a republican government with domestic tranquillity, was immediately apparent : intestine divisions of every kind rendered them completely unhappy among themselves ; and whenever they were not engaged in wars and expeditions abroad,

they were sure to be enbroiled in the most dreadful and cruel dissensions at home.

CARTHAGE, on the other hand, remained during a long space of time an association of sea-faring and commercial people : as soon as they had enriched themselves, and extended their limits, ambition and avarice rendered them a nuisance to all their neighbours. Through their industry and dexterity, together with the abilities of some of their Generals, they continued to prosper, and made extensive acquisitions ; but their internal government was a scene of perpetual agitation : the most violent and sanguinary factions were continually on foot, and proved at last the principal cause of their destruction by their more united and fortunate enemies the Romans.

THE commercial cities of Germany, known by the name of Hanseatic and Imperial, are the best model of a republican government : they far exceed the systems adopted formerly among the Greeks. The republics of this once renowned and flourishing country admitted too much of a military turn and spirit, to enjoy the fruits of peace for any continuance. But the free towns of Germany too

too well understand their real interest to abandon the pursuit of trade, in order to run after the phantom of false glory. Whenever they have drawn the sword, it has been purely in defence of their rights and properties; and whenever their prosperity ceases, it will not certainly be occasioned by their own fault, but entirely thro' causes totally independent on themselves, and which no human prudence can resist. Surrounded by potent neighbours, all of them eager to promote the commercial welfare of their own dominions, and to suppress competitors, they will, in all likelihood, either lose their trade thro' shackles and prohibitions on every side, or not improbably be obliged to submit to some of those Princes by whose dominions they are encircled, whenever these can agree together about the partition among each other, of those objects of ambition that remain within their respective reach.

BUT even in these Germanic commonwealths, let us not expect to find that perfect democracy which is by some ignorantly attributed to them: the distinction of Patrician and Plebeian families is, in more than one, kept up with all the pride and haughtiness of ancient Rome and of modern Venice,

Venice. The phlegmatic disposition of the German nation is a far more effectual safeguard and preservation from tumults and domestic strife, than the excellence of the regulations by which their internal polity is directed : these are undoubtedly judicious and well-conceived ; but among a people of a less cool and sedate nature, the power arrogated by the principal families would not, in all probability, be maintained and exercised with so much tranquility, and submitted to without reluctance and opposition from the inferior.

THIS Patrician authority in the imperial cities leads one to remark, that the genius of democracy hardly ever fails to coincide at last with that of an aristocracy. The only difference between them is, that the one is open, the other concealed. Where the nobles exclusively govern, their rank and prerogatives are ascertained, and are asserted and exercised in a manner explicit and avowed ; but where the people have an indiscriminate right to rule, and no distinction of families and hereditary dignity is allowed, such persons as have, thro' dint of artifice, found means to ingross the direction of affairs, and to confine it within the circle of their associates and relations, are obliged to do it in a surreptitious and indirect manner. Not that they
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are able to disguise it to the public; their cunning and contrivances are always seen through; but such is the temper of men, that while the authority thus acquired is acknowledged to be accidental, and as much their own right to obtain, as that of such as possess it, they are usually satisfied; and please themselves by feeding their expectation, that they may, in their turn, make part of their number: thus by degrees the management of the State centers, at length, in a fixed and limited rotation of particular families, who become as jealous of intruders, as if they had an hereditary claim to the places they fill, and as if it were a real injury to give them new associates.

IN such governments, new men, and fresh comers into office, are always looked upon with an invidious eye. In that which is absolutely aristocratic, they are not suffered; and in that which only wants the name, they are detested and ill-treated by those who are in place, and who let no opportunity escape of thwarting their measures, and mortifying their persons.

LET us, on this occasion, advert to what passes among ourselves; and learn to be vigilant in
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guarding against that monopolizing spirit of power, which steals imperceptibly even on men of the best and most upright intentions.

It has been of late years, a very common complaint among the ancient families of the gentry throughout England, that they have lost much of their parliamentary interest, as it is called; that strange innovations have taken place in the choice of Members. What is this but an implied avowal that they would, if possible, exclude all representation but of themselves? nothing being clearer than that he whose influence is such as always to be sure of his election, cannot, in the strictness of truth, be said to represent any body but himself.

So far, therefore, as any man possesses a seat in parliament founded upon such a tenure, he is to every essential purpose, title alone excepted, a Peer of the realm, and contributes as much as in him lies, to convert the democracy of this kingdom into an aristocracy.

THEY who see to what improprieties, in the general system of our constitution, such pretensions

sions in the ancient families would necessarily lead, will always behold with a very reasonable satisfaction, that change and succession of members in the House of Commons, which is one of the strongest bulwarks of our liberties. They will not complain, when they see a new man arising from the croud of those who are courting the smiles of Fortune : they will, on the contrary, rejoice, that among the motives which excite individuals to industry and the exertion of their abilities, that of obtaining one day the honour of representing their fellow-subjects, should be so cogent and effectual as it is found to be, and so productive of a determination to leave no talents untried, and to refuse no toil and trouble in order to arrive at that competency of importance, which may entitle an individual to claim and receive the distinctions which his fellow-citizens are able to confer.

BUT, exclusive of that invidiousness which marks the character of such as have ingrossed the management of affairs in a republic, and renders them so averse to the acceptance of copartners, there is another feature which ought never to be omitted in the delineation of such persons: this is the extreme jealousy with which they watch the

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speeches and writings that are held forth to the community respecting their own administration: such is their touchiness upon this subject, that whatever discloses the least tendency to freedom of discussion, is sure to meet with the most ungracious reception from them and their adherents: malevolence to the state is always pleaded on those occasions; and severity employed to silence all who dare meddle with such matters.

IN this respect most republics are as severe as the most arbitrary monarchies, and sometimes more. There is not a city in Italy, Rome, Naples, and Turin, not excepted, where a man may not utter his thoughts on public affairs with more safety than at Venice. The inquisition itself is not more prying than that government, into the discourses and behaviour of men. Where speech is so slavishly fettered, one may well conclude the press does not meet with milder treatment.

NEITHER can Holland boast of great allowances in these particulars: whatever aims at an investigation of the public concerns of that republic, unless it favours the ruling powers, is a dangerous weapon to its owner, as often has been experienced. Notwithstanding the licentious publi-

publications so usual in that country, and which are probably connived at for the sake of promoting the great trade that is carried on by the Dutch in the article of paper and books, nothing is permitted to appear in print that presumes to arraign the politics of the state.

THIS restraining spirit seems inseparable from the very nature of a republic. In the time of our civil confusions in England, during the last century, when the republican party was uppermost, the liberty of the press was one of the first objects that felt their displeasure: they oppressed it so heavily, that Milton himself, their chief literary champion, could not help complaining of their tyranny.

BUT without recalling to our minds the transactions of those unhappy times, let us candidly examine our own. The examination cannot be unfavourable to England, where the liberty of the press is allowed in the fullest latitude that its warmest partizans can desire. But is that branch of freedom on the same footing in America? Lives there a man in the Thirteen, now Independent, States, daring enough to avow a publication inimical to the spirit that pervades their political

measures ? Dares any man declare his disapprobation of the conduct pursued by the Congress ?

WHILE in this Island every man thinks himself, and is indeed, at liberty to inveigh with the utmost freedom against every part of Administration, and to call every member that composes it before the bar of his own judgment, in the most public manner ; well is it known, that in the American commonwealths an attempt of this kind, either with word or pen, would be attended with immediate danger to the person who should be so hardy as to try it.

AND yet one of the chief characteristics of that liberty which they have shed so much blood to obtain, and of which they imagine themselves so completely possessed, is that very freedom to speak and write which they keep under such restraints.

THE most beautiful, as well as the most genuine, definition of Liberty, left us by one of the noblest classics, makes it consist in thinking what one pleases, and in speaking freely one's thoughts ; but, to use his own words, rare is the felicity of those times, when mankind enjoys unmolested
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such blessings : *Rara temporum felicitas, ubi sentire possis quæ velis, et fari quæ sentias.*

AMIDST those improvements in the methods of governing men, which strongly contribute to the good behaviour and orderliness of individuals, legislators have always accounted that one the most effectual, which influences them to virtue and rectitude of conduct thro' the fear of shame. Conformably to this idea, we find that several nations of antiquity constituted an office among them, for the inspection and scrutiny of the morals and manners of the community. Rome had its Censor; Carthage a magistrate somewhat of that kind; and at Athens there was an institution of a similar tendency. In Egypt, the fountain from whence the wisdom of the Grecian lawgivers drew so many beneficial regulations, there was a censorial tribunal of the gravest and most severe complexion; it extended its jurisdiction even over the dead; kings themselves were amenable to it, and they were judged with the strictest impartiality: according as they had governed well or ill, they were pronounced worthy of respect, or deserving of contempt; and their memory was accounted blessed, or was held in execration.

IN default of so useful an institution, a well-constituted Government should substitute some sort of equivalent, or at least permit such a freedom of investigation, relative to the character and actions of individuals, as might contain them within the bounds of probity and decency, thro' the apprehension of being exposed, in case of misbehaviour, to the public censure and odium of their fellow-citizens.

EXPERIENCE has shewn, that nothing is more effectual in deterring men from incurring the danger of open stigmatization, than the privilege of scrutinising all their transactions thro' the medium of the press. In a free country, especially, such a practice ought to meet with every proper encouragement. The plea that has been urged against disturbing the peace of private life, must fall to the ground, when we reflect that the perpetrators of iniquitous deeds should not be left to enjoy peaceably the fruits of their misdemeanours and wicked contrivances; and that such as are unjustly accused have a remedy at hand, not only by clearing their character in the same manner it was attacked, but by a legal reparation of the injury offered to them, and a punishment of their accusers

accusers in the face of that public before which they have been traduced.

THIS, however, being too copious a subject to treat of at present, it will be sufficient here to observe, that the republican states in Europe have hitherto shewed themselves no friends to that liberty of the press, of which the general utility appears so evident, on a full and impartial examination. Doubtless it has, like all human institutions, some inconveniencies; but they are not weighty enough to preponderate against the far heavier scale of benefits and good consequences resulting from it: these are, on the whole, so clear and apparent, that two of the wisest and most judicious princes of our own times have granted a solemn toleration of freedom to the press in their respective dominions: the princes meant are the Emperor and the King of Sweden.

How far the spirit of American legislation will countenance the liberty of publication that is contended for, cannot be conjectured; but the severity exercised upon all who differ from the established powers in their political notions, leaves us little room to hope that an unrestrained manifestation of sentiments upon such matters will meet

meet with impunity, if contradictory to their own ; and that if the freedom of the press is permitted to exist, it will be under a variety of limitations.

LET us now, by way of conclusion, sum up and collect into one view, the principles that flow from the various observations which have been made.

THE first maxim established by the facts which have been related is, that a republican government is the fittest for a people not numerous, and inclosed within a narrow space of land, whose wealth is too moderate to create and support luxury, and who, at the same time, have no views of extending themselves; nor have any reason to apprehend invasions.

EVERY one of these are necessary ingredients in the composition of a commonwealth, that harbours any reasonable and well-founded expectation of attaining and enjoying a permanence of political felicity.

THE two last are fundamentally requisite, as, notwithstanding the mediocrity of wealth and of numbers, should the desire of acquiring more territory,

tory, or the dread of an ambitious neighbour, put arms into the hands of such a people, they will soon feel the bad effects of such a situation: in either case their freedom will be endangered; they will, at the long run, either be subdued by a more powerful neighbour; or if their enterprizes should succeed, they will, on the other hand, by a gradual increase of might and consideration, rise to a proportion too great for their internal tranquility: opulence and pride will produce factions, and they will, in the end, be subjected by some of their military leaders.

THE second maxim is equally clear with the first, from which it directly originates, and is a necessary deduction: a great and opulent nation can never be well and peaceably governed under the form of a republic; and must, of necessity, either be torn by perpetual dissensions, or resolve itself into a monarchy.

THE third maxim which occurs, after pondering seriously on the first two, is, that since the system of a republic or an aristocracy is inadmissible, while we consult the general good of a great nation; and as an absolute and arbitrary monarchy is equally, at least, incompatible with the happi-

ness of society; we are therefore to seek a medium between these two extremes, not less removed from despotism in one, than from tyranny in many.

It is somewhat astonishing, that the collected wisdom of antiquity did never discover a form of government re-uniting in a compact and practicable manner the power of a king and the liberty of a people. In the conceptions of the Greeks and Romans, no middle path offered itself between absolute slavery to a prince, and a republic without a legal chief. Their passion for liberty decided them for the latter; and as they were actuated by so noble a motive, their choice was certainly justifiable and praise-worthy; the inconveniences of the first being greater than those of the last.

THE factions which had distracted Rome while a commonwealth, and the subsequent miseries that were experienced under too many of the ensuing emperors, directed the search of thinking men towards a milder and more equitable plan than that which subjected multitudes to the rule and will of a single man, and a less turbulent and licentious

licentious one than that which committed them to the factious management of many.

THIS happy plan was hit upon in theory, but was deemed too refined for practice. The great classical politician, Tacitus, pronounces it impracticable; which is the more surprising, as in the description he gives us of the people of Germany, and of their manners and government, he lays before us the outlines of that which they afterwards established in so many parts of Europe. But as the Germans were looked upon as Barbarians, it is probable, that considering them in that light, in conformity with his countrymen, he did not pay sufficient attention to the rules and maxims by which they were governed; and thought it therefore intirely needless to examine and appropundise them, as being, in his opinion, inapplicable to the exigencies of the Romans at that time.

It is plain from his own words, that a constitution, such as all good men would approve, and the wisest wonder had remained so long untried, was one of those arcanas and mysteries in politics, which experience had not yet revealed, and of which the practicability appeared highly doubtful.

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A composition of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, was a phenomenon that seemed to him to carry only plausibility, and, if realized, would not last. *Delecta ex his, et constituta reipublicæ forma, laudari facilius quam evenire, vel si evenit, baud diuturna esse potest.*

FORTUNATELY for mankind, this auspicious idea has been realized in more countries than one. The greatest part of Europe has enjoyed for the course of several ages, the blessings of liberty under monarchical governments. What the most polished and studious nations could not, with the labours and experiments of so many centuries, accomplish, was brought to pass by rude and illiterate barbarians; as if Nature delighted on some occasions to manifest in the most signal manner, how much the commonest of her gifts, plain simple sense, is superior to all the researches and intricacies of learning. This admirable plan of government was not discovered at Rome or Athens; it was found in the wilds and forests of Germany.

Thus Gothic ignorance triumphed over Greek and Roman knowledge; and established the empire

pire of liberty upon the ruins of that extensive tyranny which the latter had spread through so many parts of the world, and had so long and so severely exercised. First planted in their own countries by the hardy inhabitants of the North, that salutiferous tree stretched its prolific branches over the regions of the South, and long continued to flourish with primitive vigour.

BUT these days of liberty are past: far the greatest part of Europe has lost that inestimable jewel; and we alone retain that noblest monument of human wisdom—a constitution wherein royalty and liberty are united for their equal support. Some faint resemblances of it may still subsist; but Great-Britain only exhibits the genuine picture, the real and true original of substantial freedom.

By attending to the various causes which have first prepared, and to those that in process of time have accelerated its destruction, we shall learn how to guard against the former, and how to retrieve it from the still more dangerous pressures of the latter. Like bodies whose weight and velocity augment as they fall, the catastrophe of States hastens with additional rapidity, the nearer they approach to their ruin.

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THAT party rage and parliamentary corruption are precipitating this country to a speedy downfall, is universally agreed ; that the most expeditious remedies are needed, is equally true ; but which are the most proper and effectual, is now become a matter of the most violent contest between all parties.

MONTESQUIEU has foretold, that whenever the deliberative power of the state shall become more corrupt than the executive, the constitution of England will be at an end. This is a short text ; but what an ample comment it would produce, were the multifarious meaning of those few words to be unfolded, and could Montesquieu himself be the commentator ?

CERTAIN it is, that liberty is a weapon of which faction always makes the most iniquitous use. It is intended as a sword of defence for the public, and in the hands of patriots is never otherwise ; but how often is it converted into a dagger to assassinate the constitution ?

THE corruption pointed at by Montesquieu, is not only that base venality of soul which, for a pecuniary

pecuniary hire, lets itself out to the highest bidder ; there is another species of corruption still more pestiferous than the other, and which poisons the very source of integrity, by invading the heart, and perverting the mind, filling the one with every mean and odious passion, and mis-employing all the talents of the other.

WHEN the capacity of men is more valued and extolled than their probity, and the views of party have the sole direction of their abilities ; when they lose themselves in labyrinths and mazes of argument and disputation, that are levelled indiscriminately at whatever proceeds from the contrary side, then may we bid farewell to the prosperity of the public : it is no longer the affairs of the State that engage the warmth of disputants ; it is the fury of reciprocal opposition ; it is the eagerness to represent each other in the worst light and most disgraceful colours that envy and malevolence can suggest. Well may we then say what Voltaire applies to the corrupt times of the Roman republic : *La liberté n'est plus que le droit de se nuire* : Liberty is but the right of reciprocal mischief.

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How far this fatal spirit may influence the representatives of the nation, let them determine who best know what passes within the Houses of Parliament. But let us not deceive ourselves, by vainly hoping that a nation can prosper, while its rulers disagree and oppose each other from mere motives of party and personal hatred: its interests cannot be zealously consulted, while individuals are so deeply intent upon their own private quarrels.

It has long been the complaint of the dispassionate part of the Public, that invective and abuse have usurped the place of reasoning among our senators; and that some of the most celebrated speeches within doors have been dictated by the factious rancour which prevails without.

Nor do the discontent and murmurs of a considerable part, perhaps the majority, of the nation rest at this point: they scruple not to affirm, that the unfortunate issue of the present contest with America, and the dismemberment of the British empire, is owing principally to that spirit of discord which has taken possession of the leading men in this kingdom.

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CERTAIN it is, that the violence and outrageousness of party rage is risen to the height of ungovernableness and indecency. Unprejudiced foreigners have observed, that on no occasion are the English so apt to lose their native coolness and candour, as in parliamentary debates; which, instead of calm deliberations, conducted with temper and dignity, often degenerate into scenes that resemble the disorder and confusion of a Polish Diet.

THE respect of the Public for its representatives cannot fail to be impaired by such misconduct; neither can they repose much confidence in measures, the wisdom of which is impeached with so much virulence; nor can they tell on whose judgment, or even honesty, to make any dependence, while they are both perpetually called in question with so little ceremony.

WHEN people are often taken up with mutual recriminations, it is a sure sign that both sides have been faulty; for which reason, the rulers of a State should be extremely cautious how they afford a handle to the Public to suspect them of incapacity, by exposing each other's weak sides. It is better, in many cases, to conceal errors and

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blunders, and mutually to spare each other's defects, than to lose that reverence among the community, which is fundamentally requisite for the due support of government, as no State can prosper without a chearful acquiescence in the decrees and ordinances of its ruling members.

IN this country, the very existence of the constitution depends on the good opinion entertained of the deliberative power, especially of that part which originates immediately from the people. Should ever the British Parliament, through the imprudence, the intemperate behaviour, the meanesses of those who compose it, forfeit its honour and credit with its constituents, and become an object of indifference and slight, the consequences are so obvious, that they need not be mentioned.

LET us hope, in the mean time, that we are not yet arrived at that crisis which Montesquieu threatens to be so fatal to this nation. Let us avert that signature of our doom, by applying those remedies in time, which the excellence of our constitution has happily provided. They are at hand, and will unquestionably prove efficacious, if we have recourse to them with sincerity, as they
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require a much less considerable exertion of abilities, than of diligence and honesty.

As our domestic felicity depends entirely on ourselves, so does in a great measure the rank and consideration we are to hold among the nations abroad.

NOTWITHSTANDING our late losses and calamities, we are yet in a situation to cherish the fairest hopes and expectations of a happy futurity; we have honourably concluded a glorious, tho' an unprosperous war; we have stood the brunt of the most powerful confederacy that was ever formed against any State; and tho' we have not been conquerors, we yet remain unconquered.

WHOEVER is conversant in ancient and modern transactions, must readily acknowledge, that Great-Britain has undergone the most arduous trial ever recorded in history. Rome, of old, in the extremity of her distress, had only Carthage to contend with. The enemies who formerly threatened Venice soon fell out among themselves, and France was the only power truly formidable to that people. Spain, while opposed in the career of its ambitious projects, encountered foes

much inferior in wealth and military force, who stood merely on the defensive, and were always ready and desirous to accept of peace. Holland, when attacked by France and England in the last century, well knew the discontent of the English at the measures pursued by the Ministry of Charles the Second; and was shortly relieved from its apprehensions, by the pacification into which that Monarch was forced by the clamours of his subjects and the firmness of his parliament. When the grand alliance took place, at the opening of this century, against the restless ambition of Louis the Fourteenth, France had an associate in Spain who stood by her to the last; she had powerful allies in the empire; she had strong expectations of support among the mal-contents in our Island; she viewed Charles the Twelfth of Sweden in the light of a well-wisher; Austria was an enemy that, throughout the whole war, hung like a dead weight upon the principal foes who attacked her; These were Great-Britain and Holland, the only part of the confederacy from which she ever entertained any real apprehensions.

BUT how different was the case of Britain in the late contest? Her American Colonies alone had with-

withstood all her efforts ; Holland had more than once faced her singly on the ocean ; France is indubitably the greatest Power in Europe, and, assisted by Spain, formed a combination that was thought invincible. So truly terrible and tremendous an association was this nation compelled, unsupported, unbefriended, to oppose by land and sea in various quarters of the globe. There seemed to be a stubborn unanimity among our numerous adversaries ; they seemed to nourish a malevolence even superior to the efforts they were continually exerting and planning for our destruction ; they scarcely knew what bounds to set to the pretensions they were daily forming to our prejudice : the undaunted resistance they met with, and the unexpected disappointments that befel their arms, fired them with an implacable and unlimited resentment, and added equally to their rage and perseverance.

SUCH were the foes whom we have combated and resisted with so much glory. It now remains that we should improve the many advantages preserved to us by our valour. The pacification which has put an end to this destructive quarrel, opens a variety of encouraging prospects to a nation whose spirit is so enterprizing, and whose industry

industry is so boundless. The resources of an active and ingenious people are immense, especially when their government is founded on the principles of freedom.

WITHOUT expatiating on the respective condition of Great Britain, and that of our late enemies, it is agreed that the comparison is altogether in our favour; and that a cessation of hostilities, however we might need one, was not less necessary for them.

LET us therefore exert our vigilance and assiduity in the prosecution of our national interests, with the same fervour and diligence that have so long and so justly characterised us. An ample field lies open for the exercise of our commercial talents abroad, and no less a spacious one for the employment of our attention at home: the latter especially has of late years proved itself an object of more copious expectation than ever, and promises an increase of domestic advantages, of which men of knowledge and observation fully perceive the certainty. Our most dangerous and most enlightened rivals are equally aware of the benefits that will result from the internal improvements of which this island is so peculiarly susceptible; and
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some of the most intelligent behold their probability in the necessary consequences of the late war.

WHILE we continue to act with circumspection and vigour, we need not apprehend to maintain our former dignity among the nations. They cannot forget the respectable figure we made, when surrounded by as many enemies as we had neighbours; when, either openly or covertly, Europe seemed engaged in a conspiracy to oppress us: the invincible courage of Great Britain, in the midst of all these difficulties, will long remain impressed on their memory; and it will be wholly our own fault if it is ever forgotten.

NOTHING but indolence and supineness can sink us below our present level. If we could, in spite of innumerable pressures, stand our ground, and balance the fate of war, surely now that we are coming to enjoy the advantages of peace, it were absurd to imagine that we are upon a worse footing than before.

To conclude, the condition of Great Britain at present, is like that of a ship just escaped, through the activity and expertness of the mariners on board,

board, from a dangerous storm: though her masts may be carried away, and her sails and rigging torn, while her hull is sound, all damages may be repaired. In the same manner, notwithstanding it has suffered in its extremities, the main body of the British Empire remains untouched, its constitution unaltered, and its spirit unbroken. In such circumstances, possessing within itself a multitude of resources, and deriving from its situation numberless ways and means to thrive and prosper, nothing but discord or mismanagement can prevent it from retaining its usual weight in the political scale of Europe, and remaining, as heretofore, one of the most flourishing and potent states in the universe.



F I N I S.